

Washington, DC - Congressman John Adler, joined by the entire New Jersey congressional delegation, sent a letter to President Barack Obama calling for all federal civilian employees on Joint Base McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst to be paid equally under a higher locality pay.

The delegation called on the Obama administration to fill vacancies at the Federal Salary Council, which has jurisdiction over locality pay issues. Currently, there are five appointment openings on the council which must be filled and if left open, could delay resolving this important issue.

"It's essential that we support our Joint Base during this critical transition," said Congressman Adler, who represents Joint Base McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst. "I am committed to making sure that civilian employees, who live and work in our neighborhoods and on our bases, are paid fairly. We need to keep these jobs in New Jersey."

The new Joint Base McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst is scheduled to be fully operational on October 1, 2009. This tri-service installation is unique because it consists of installations from two separate locality pay jurisdictions. Therefore, civilians working the same job on different areas of the joint base will be paid different wages.

Earlier this summer, Congressman Adler released a report revealing the pay discrepancy on the Joint Base. In the weeks following, Congressman Adler passed a Sense of Congress, included in the National Defense Authorization Act that sent a clear message to the Office of Personnel Management that all federal civilian employees on the Joint Base should be paid equally under the higher locality pay. Congressman Adler also participated in a colloquy with Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Ike Skelton that demonstrated their support of the issue. You can view the colloquy [here](#). Congressman Adler has also introduced legislation that would prevent pay issues at the Joint Base.

The entire text of the delegation letter is below.

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President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are writing regarding an outstanding pay parity issue at the new Joint Base McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst (JB MDL), which is scheduled to be fully operational on October 1, 2009. The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations of 2005 ordered the consolidation of many bases across the country, but our tri-service installation is unique. The JB MDL consists of installations from two separate locality pay jurisdictions: Burlington County, which includes McGuire Air Force Base and Fort Dix, within the Philadelphia locality pay area, and Ocean County, which includes Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station, within the New York locality pay area. Therefore, civilians working the same job on different areas of the joint base will be paid different wages. In order to fix this unfair discrepancy, we ask you to appoint members to fill vacancies at the Federal Salary Council, which has jurisdiction over locality pay issues

The civilian pay discrepancy will lead to undue administrative burdens on the Air Force leadership that is responsible for overseeing the day to day operation of the base. Administrative red tape should be decreased, not increased. In order for this new joint base to operate efficiently and effectively as a cohesive installation, it is essential to pay all employees based on the same pay scale. Accordingly, the Air Force has requested that the joint base be placed in Ocean County for all aspects of locality pay.

It is our understanding that the Federal Salary Council typically meets in the fall of each year to review locality pay issues. Currently, there are five appointment openings on the council which must be filled and if left open, could delay resolving this important issue. We respectfully request that you appoint members to the open positions on the Federal Salary Council so a recommendation can be made to the President's Pay Agent.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ), Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Rep. John Adler (D-03), Rep. Robert E. Andrews (D-01), Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (R-11), Rep. Scott Garrett (R-05), Rep. Rush D. Holt (D-12), Rep. Leonard Lance (R-07), Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo (R-12), Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr (D-06), Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-08), Rep. Donald M. Payne (D-10), Rep. Steven R. Rothman (D-09), Rep. Albio Sires (D-13), Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-04)